Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Department of Public Health
Drug Control Program

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT IMPLEMENTATION OF AMENDMENTS TO 105 CMR 721.006(J) MA PRESCRIPTION MONITORING PROGRAM

Issued July 10, 2008

1. Q ***What changes will there be to existing Prescription Monitoring Program (PMP) regulations?***

A Briefly the amendments will:

a. authorize the Department of Public Health (Department) to provide dispensing information on Schedule II controlled substances to practitioners and pharmacies for clinical assessment and harm reduction;

b. require pharmacies to report to the Department additional information about Schedule II prescriptions to increase utility of the database; and

c. change the current customer identification provision from a request to a requirement that positive identification be presented before the dispensing of Schedule II drugs to reduce opportunities for prescription fraud.

For additional information, see the web link below.

2. Q ***When will the amendments to the PMP regulations become effective?***

A Amendments to the PMP regulations are made jointly by the Drug Control Program (DCP) and Board of Registration in Pharmacy (Board). The DCP regulations will become effective upon publication in the Massachusetts Register. The Board regulations will subsequently become effective after approval by the Board. There will be a 90 day period after the effective date of the Board regulations to allow for software changes and for pharmacists to become familiar with the new information they will be collecting and reporting.

3. Q ***When will there be guidance on the information the pharmacy will be required to report?***

A A handbook containing detailed guidance is being prepared by the Department and Atlantic Associates, the vendor responsible for collecting the MA PMP data. The guidance handbook will be available prior to the effective date of the Board regulations.

4. Q ***When will there be technical guidance for software developers?***

A The above mentioned handbook will contain the technical guidance information for pharmacy software developers.

5. Q ***When will dispensing information be provided to practitioners and pharmacies?***

A Reports will be provided to practitioners and pharmacies at the initiative of the Department based upon detection questionable prescription activity.
There will be significant lead time until this new program is up and running and dispensing information can be provided to practitioners and pharmacies. An analyzable database, incorporating the new information, is the necessary first step. For further information, see the links below.

6. Q **Can you provide web links and contact information?**

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